

Jungle of Sorts?

Macro Analysis of Reported Security Breakdowns
in Nigeria

CODE's Monthly Security Dossier

June 2022



1. Executive Summary

Whereas economic development does not automatically build peace, it is difficult to imagine economic development without peace. Nigeria is amongst the countries in the world with the largest number of terror-related deaths. Against this backdrop, there's need to systematically track security breakdowns across the federation so as to synthesize security advisories (recommendations) for mobilising critical voices for high-level policy attention on conflict management. Using content analysis technique, three national newspapers were sampled for reported incidents of security breakdown across the federation. In June (baseline month), 465 persons lost their lives to violent attacks; 355 persons were kidnapped and 120 persons sustained varying degrees of injuries. About 2,000 persons (in rural communities) suffered displacement. Despite the intensity and coverage of attacks, only about 186 suspects have been arrested in connection to the attacks and arrests does not translate to trials or judicial prosecutions. Overall, it is plausible that these attacks, unabated, could pose catastrophic implications for Nigeria's democracy and more specifically the forthcoming 2023 general elections. Even as defence budgets keep growing, we call for accountability in security expenditures and ultimately, better security outcomes - safer communities.



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2. Background

Recently, violent attacks in Nigeria are growing in scale and intensity with lethal consequences on the economy and polity. Either by state or non-state actors, lives are brutally neutralised with little or no consequences. For instance, in the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic-induced lockdowns, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) reported that security forces enforcing the lockdown killed more people than coronavirus itself.¹ This is not an isolated incident; cases of police brutality are commonplace and security forces are silently acquiring reputations for notoriety, corruption, and abuse of power. On the other, bandits randomly attack communities - inflicting heavy human casualties; rustling cattle; destroying properties and social installations - police stations and food silos.² From rural communities to urban centres, innocent lives are hanging in the balance and authorities seem to be sleeping away.

Although attacks occur in different degrees, the common manifestations present as terrorism, insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, armed robbery, ritual killings, unknown gunmen (UGM), etc. With the Federal Government (FG) trapped in pathological excuses that criminals (suspects) are foreign nationals³, attacks are metastasizing - uprooting indig-

enous people, undermining governance and democratic dividends and sabotaging economic production, ultimately. While security is everybody's business, governments are primarily constituted and vested with powers, responsibilities, privileges and obligations to deliver peace and stability. But as security provisioning continues to suffer deterioration, what can organised voices do to support public peace, security, and development?

As a leading civil society organisation in Africa, Connected Development through this Monthly Security Dossiers (MSD) aims to systematically track security breakdowns across the federation; conduct incident and trend analysis, and synthesize security advisories (recommendations) for mobilising critical voices for high-level policy attention on conflict management and intelligence production. Fundamentally the MSDs shall mine and document discrete incidents for macro analysis and policy advocacy.

3. Justification

Beyond election seasons; critical to understanding and mobilising resources for peace and security is a strong body of evidence on security breakdowns. Because violent incidents are turning commonplace, the tendency and risk of government and policy community casualising attacks and neglecting/abandoning victims or survivors are rife. Therefore, the impetus and rationality of the series are rooted in civic vigilance and engagement, policy advocacy, and policy-influencing. As part of intended outcomes, MSDs will be used for agenda-setting and enrichment of evidence for policymaking, conflict management and election preparedness.



4. Research Methodology

Using content analysis, we created a database of attacks reported in mainstream newspapers for the study. To eliminate or control "fake news" the sample size was restricted to violent attacks reported in mainstream newspapers. Three newspapers - Daily Trust, Business Day, and Thisday - were purposively selected because of their national orientation and coverage. Discrete news articles are the units of analysis. The dossier shall be a monthly to enable inter-month comparability. For consistency, data collection for every series runs from the first day of the month to the last day.



5. Findings And Discussions

5.1 Trails of Security Breakdowns in Nigeria

In June (the baseline month), a total of 3,120 Nigerians were victims of security breakdowns across the federation. Furthermore, 465 persons were killed; 355 persons were kidnapped; 120 persons sustained varying degrees of injuries, and 2,000 persons were displaced. The North-west is the leading hotbed for insecurity. Correspondingly, it has the highest number of deaths, abductions, and displacements whereas the South-south is the least plagued geopolitical zone (Table 1). Overall, all regions, bar none, are troubled and experiencing different degrees of social turmoil and violent attacks. From the scale of attacks, there is no gainsaying that economic productions are thwarted and sabotaged in affected communities because citizens have to be first alive to indulge in economic exchanges. While economic development does not automatically translate to peace, it is difficult to imagine economic development without peace.

Table 1: Trails of Violent Attacks in Nigeria in June 2022

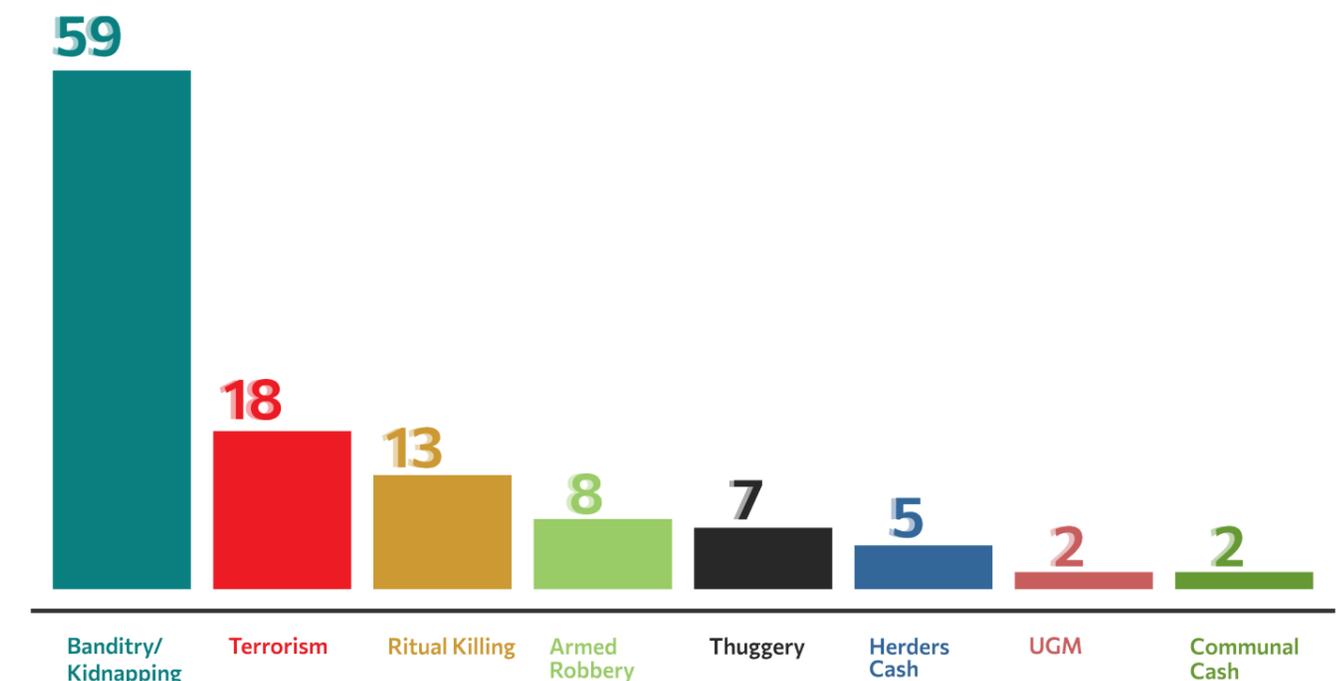
Geopolitical zone	State	Killed	Injured	Abducted	Rescued	Displaced	Total Casualty
South East	Abia	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Anambra	25	8	1	9	-	43
	Ebonyi	9	-	-	-	-	9
	Imo	3	2	-	-	-	5
North East	Bauchi	10	4	2	-	-	16
	Borno	100	-	8	105	-	213
North Central	Benue	29	1	12	7	-	49
	Kwara	5	-	10	-	-	15
	Niger	24	13	56	-	-	93
	Kogi	22	15	10	8	-	55
	Plateau	4	-	-	21	-	25
North West	Jigawa	-	-	1	-	-	1
	Kaduna	88	5	108	3	-	204
	Kano	3	-	1	-	-	4
	Sokoto	3	-	30	21	-	54
	Katsina	1	6	38	1	-	46
	Zamfara	49	-	52	1	2,000	2,102
South South	Akwa Ibom	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Bayelsa	4	-	-	-	-	4
	Delta	4	-	-	-	-	4
	Edo	7	-	-	-	-	7
South West	Lagos	1	-	-	-	-	1
	Ogun	13	-	2	-	-	15
	Ondo	47	64	-	-	-	111
	Osun	2	-	-	-	-	2
	Abuja	4	-	23	4	-	31
	Total	465	102	355	180	2,000	3,120

5.2 Characterisation (Forms) of Security Breakdowns

Although political thuggery is not the strongest contributor to security breakdowns, seven (7) attacks out of 114 incidents were attributed to political thuggery. The most reported form of attack is banditry (59 incidents) followed by terrorism - attacks by Boko Haram and its splinter groups (18 incidents) and ritual killing (13 incidents). For the management of elections, these are early warning signals (symptoms) that the 2023 general elections may be thuggery-infested. In previous Nigerian elections, political thuggery persists as one of the serious factors challenging election credibility, free-ness, and fairness. For instance, in the just concluded gubernatorial elections in Ekiti State, the campaign train of Chief Segun Oni suffered multiple disruptions due to invasions by political thugs.⁴

On terrorism, maybe the prevalence could have been worst without counter-terrorism operations happening (Operation Hadin Kai; Operation Hadarin Daji; Operation Safe Haven; Operation Whirl Stroke; Operation Thunder Strike/Whirl Punch; Operation Delta Safe; etc.) in different parts of the country. Although military authorities have persistently complained that their personnel are overstretched⁵, the Federal Government spends a substantial share of its annual budgets on the military or security sector. For instance, in the N13.59 trillion 2021 budget, defence and security got N1.96 trillion. That was not all; there was another N722.53 billion added to defence and security through a supplementary budget.⁶

Nigeria's military budget is greater than the combined armed forces spending of the rest of West Africa but these expenditures have not succeeded in halting incessant attacks on civilian and military targets. On the other hand, the prominence of ritual killings can be attributed to an upsurge in black market economies notably cybercriminals (know as Yahoo-Yahoo) and organ trafficking.⁷



5.3 Rural-Urban Distribution of Security Breakdowns in June

In addition to large displacements of people occurring in rural communities, rural dwellers are also the worst-affected terms of fatalities. Out of the 465 deaths in June, the bulk of victims died in locations outside the state capitals. Because of the tendency and practice of disproportionately concentrating available resources at the seats of governments (at the detriment of the hinterlands), state capitals are often the most developed and secured parts of any state. With rural areas defined as places outside the state capitals (in this report), only about 15 persons (3.23%) died in urban centres in June. In other words, the majority of victims (450 persons; 96.77%) were killed in rural areas.

This supports the notion that rural areas are structurally marginalised geographies in the distribution of social amenities, including security infrastructures in Nigeria. That rural areas are fast falling to criminal gangs as ungoverned spaces where they illegally hold territories for their nebulous trades is a phenomenon that cannot be reasonably justified. In Zamfara State, the large displacement of rural dwellers whose livelihood assets are location-specific is worrisome and could plunge Nigeria into a largescale food crisis. So, rural banditry has a food crisis component that does not receive due or appropriate attention.

Table 2: Distribution Of Victims By Geography

Geography	% Of Victims Killed	% Of Victims Injured	% Of Victims Kidnapped	% Of Victims Rescued	% Of Victims Displaced
Rural	96.77% (450)	99.17% (119)	90.45% (321)	97.78% (176)	100% (2000)
Urban	3.23% (15)	0.83% (1)	9.55% (34)	2.22% (4)	0%(0)
Grand Total	100% (465)	100% (120)	100% (355)	100% (180)	100% (2000)



The use of unconventional (local) security formations (hunters and vigilante groups) to police rural areas may not be yielding desired results at the moment. For instance, in a single attack in Zamfara State, 30 members of a vigilante security outfit were murdered by bandits.⁸ This speaks to two things: the firepower of the bandits and the irreplaceability of conventional (regular) security agencies in policing rural communities and maintaining law and order. It further suggests that the growing appetite for resorting to “self-help” groups in meeting security demands in the states needs scientific scrutiny and evaluation especially as they hardly possess the requisite training and hardware to confront terrorists or heavily-armed bandits. On the deployment of self-help groups (vigilante forces), concerns on human rights violations remain unarguably high.

Figure 2: Distribution of crimes and victims by geography

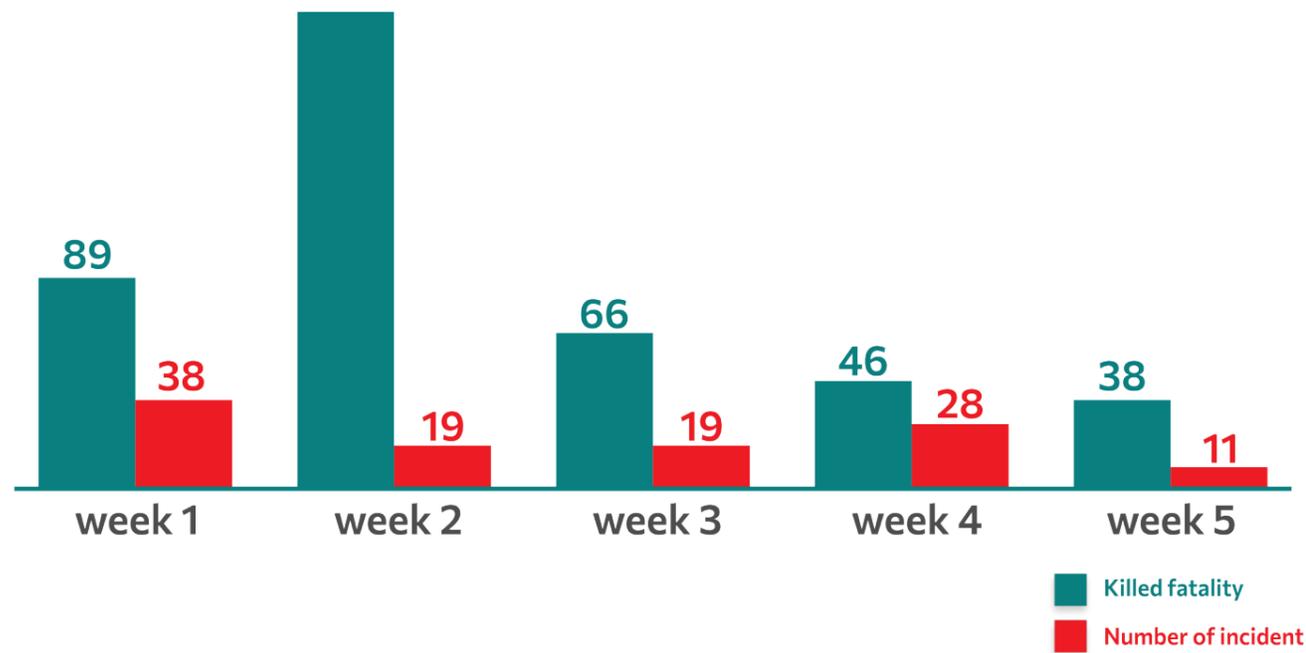
Geography	Armed Robbery	Banditry	Communal Cash	Herders Cash	Ritual Killings	Terrorism	UGM	Total
Rural	1	204	22	15	13	186	4	448
Urban	1	2	-	-	9	0	3	15
Grand	2	206	22	15	22	186	7	463

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5.4 Further Disaggregation Of Incidents And Fatalities By Weeks

As can be deduced below (Figure 3), there is no correlation between fatalities and the number of incidents in June. More people were killed in week 2 (226 persons) in 19 incidents compared to week 1 where 89 persons were killed in 38 incidents. However, in the last days of June, both the number of reported incidents and fatality was observed to be lower than in other preceding weeks. It is not easy to synthesise the reason for the drop in the number of attacks and fatalities but it is plausible that security agencies were responding to threats, accordingly. However, only succeeding weeks and months would be able to reveal definite/concrete patterns.

Figure 3: Disaggregation Of Incidents And Fatalities By Week In June



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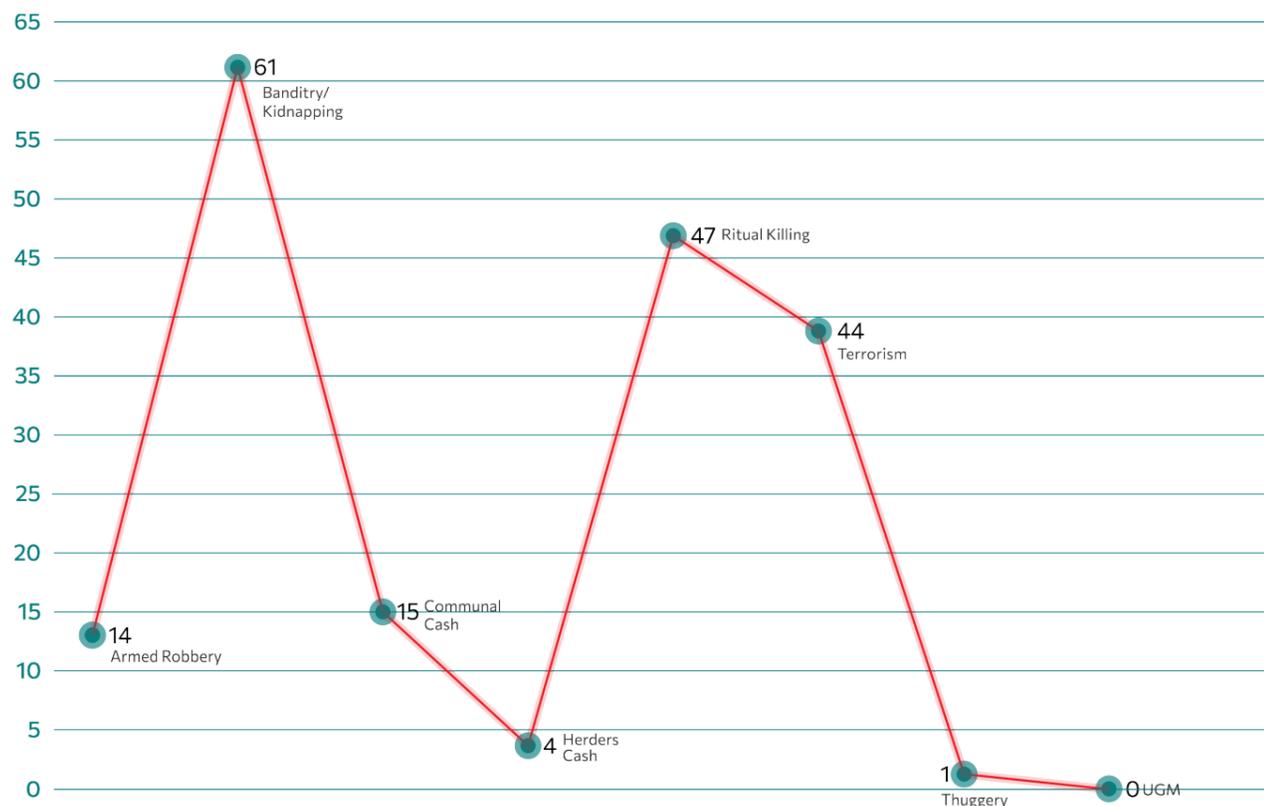
5.5 Arrests And Judicial Prosecution Of Suspects

In the month under review (June), Nigeria's security agencies recorded a total of 186 arrests across the federation. Statistically, this is equivalent to 6 arrests per state. Compared to 465 persons that died, and 356 persons that were kidnapped; the number of arrests was not commensurate with the intensity of security breakdowns across the federation. On prosecutions after arrests, Nigerians have not hidden their discontents and irritations on the level of convictions secured against suspects, those in the public domain at least. Nonetheless, the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Lucky Irabor simply reacted to public discontents and anxieties that the Nigerian army lack the jurisdiction to prosecute suspects.⁹

While the army authorities may be technically correct, the blackout on judicial actions taken against primary suspects arrested by security agencies is unacceptable or unsatisfactory. In a 2018 report - The Limits of Punishment: Transitional Justice and Violent Extremism, Nigerians are unmistakable that suspects should be duly punished for their crimes.¹⁰ In fact, Nigerians do accuse authorities of informal reconciliation and leniency measures against ex-fighters - which should not be. In the long run, this complaint unaddressed could puncture and flatten public trust in the prosecution of insecurity anti-banditry or counter-terrorism interventions across the federation.



Figure 4: Distribution Of Arrests Relating To Security Breakdowns Across Nigeria In June



In addition to growing discontent that cases against suspects are not pursued to their logical conclusions, the greatest danger is that the practice could embolden criminal elements to expand and consolidate their networks. Beyond the usual practice of parading suspects (media shaming), suspects should be transparently prosecuted in appropriate courts to deter criminal tendencies or actual involvements. Therefore, the compounding effects of low-calibre arrests and blackout on judicial prosecutions are not only undesirable but harmful to the Nigerian public psyche.

5.6 More Funds or Safer Communities?

In recent years, Nigeria has increased military spending or defence budget to enhance its military power and improve security conditions (Table 3) but attacks are not subsiding correspondingly. As recent trends have shown, security breakdowns are worsening despite huge budgetary provisions.

Are the FG and States required to pump more resources to security agencies in order to harvest desired results or is accountability the missing link in achieving safer communities? One obvious point is undeniable, the federating units cannot continue to vote scarce resources for security services (at the detriment of critical sectors - education and health) without corresponding outcomes on peace and political stability. We envisage that this is the right opportunity for relevant stakeholders to shine the light on Nigeria's defence expenditure and extract military accountability.

Be that as it may, what is incontestable or self-evident is that current security outcomes or incidents across the federation cast serious questions on the efficiency of defence expenditures. Nigeria's security formations, like other sectors, are not immune to fiscal abuse or corruption. In 2021, the United States Government, through its Department of State, argued that impunity and corruption are major drivers of impunity in Nigeria's security agencies - police, the State Security Service, and the army.¹¹ What cannot be easily established is what is the silver bullet to guarantee the safety of lives and properties: more funds or operational efficiency or both. Increasing budgetary allocations to security agencies is not enough; accountability and efficiency matter as well. Nigerians have every incentives to adequately fund its security agencies as well as demand equivalent value for allocations and expenditures. Due to large scale political corruption and unwholesome privatisation of public policy, new energy on political accountability in security expenditures cannot be said to be misplaced. Nigerians need value for their scarce public funds.



Table 3: Trends in Federal Defence Allocations (2015-2021)

Year	Federal Budget Size (Trillion Naira)	Share of the Security Sector (Trillion Naira)	Share of the Security Sector (%)
2015	4.405	0.988	22
2016	6.06	1.07	18
2017	7.44	1.15	16
2018	9.12	1.35	15
2019	8.92	1.4	16
2020	10.59	1.8	17
2021	13.59	1.96*	14

Source: CODE Research and compilations from Guardian Newspaper

*Later in the year, the FG added N722.53 billion to the initial N1.96 trillion allocated in 2021 through the supplementary budget.

7. Recommendations

Nigeria's security ecosystem is growing in operational complexity and bureaucratic sophistication. Therefore, there is no one size fits all solution to the multi-layer security breakdowns in recent times. However, based on the scope of this MSD, the following recommendations can be handy for policymakers.

1. The most prominent sources of insecurity in June are banditry, terrorism and ritual killing. As such, the orientations of security operations should be adjusted, tweaked or sharpened to reflect contemporary realities. Beyond the usual practice of parading suspects (media-shaming), suspects should be transparently prosecuted in appropriate courts to deter criminal tendencies or actual involvements. The compounding effects of low-calibre arrests and blackout on judicial prosecutions are not only undesirable but harmful to the Nigerian public psyche.
2. Reports of political thuggery in Ekiti State are redlines that must be closely watched. The electoral management body (INEC) must keep close eyes to determine the best ways to curtail reported electoral violence from overflowing into the 2023 general election. Of course, safeguarding and guaranteeing electoral integrity is a matter of national security.
3. That security agents are not making commensurate arrests compared to threats posed by reported criminal cases/incidents across the federation are not less dangerous than the crimes themselves. As a strategy, securities authorities should contemplate communicating their successes (arrests and judicial convictions). Plausibly, they would win more public trust and confidence. Once security operations can be judged to be technically efficient and professional sound, extracting trust from citizens will be an easy harvest in our estimation.
4. Rural communities are the worst-affected locations in June. Therefore, it is only logical that personnel deployments and surveillance are strengthened around vulnerable regions without neglecting urban centres. Rural areas and their dwellers have the same or more security needs than urban dwellers.
5. To minimise corruption in Nigeria's defence expenditures, there must be an acceptable level of due diligence and accountability in military budgeting, contracting and procurement processes. In providing oversight functions, the constitutional enablements of the National Assembly cannot be overemphasized.
6. The use of unconventional (local) security formations (hunters and vigilante groups) to police rural areas may not be yielding desired results at the moment. The attack in Zamfara State where 30 members of the vigilante force were murdered by bandits speaks to two things: the firepower of the bandits and the irreplaceability of conventional (regular) security agencies in policing our communities and maintaining law and order. It suggests that the growing appetite for security self-help groups in meeting local security demands needs scientific scrutiny and evaluation especially as: they hardly possess the requisite training and hardware to confront terrorists or heavily-armed bandits; the mounting concerns on human rights violations by vigilante forces remain unarguably high.

8. Conclusions

Because a democratic and inclusive society must be safe, the explosion of security breakdowns - the scale of killings, kidnappings, etc. across Nigeria is unacceptable. The security agencies are by this report tasked to duty that Nigerian lives are hanging in the balance across the federation. With serious incidents of political thuggery reported in the just concluded gubernatorial elections in Ekiti State, likely invasion by political thugs during 2023 electioneering is an ugly prediction and factor.

Although some suspects have been arrested, public information on prosecutions from courts of competent jurisdictions remain inadequate. Arresting suspecting and parading them (media-shaming) alone is not enough to deliver justice to victims of organised criminalities. Suspects need to smell the rods after their days in courts. With unprovoked attacks on farming communities impacting food prices and imposing food shortages (famine - as a result of hyperinflation), the extent to which insecurity will affect the 2023 general is not known in definite terms but remains predictable.



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Appendix 1: Compilation Of Case Units

Incident Particulars	Newspaper	Date	State	Local Govt.	Source
20-year-old Mother Stabs Boy to Death in Ondo	Thisday	1/6/2022	Ondo	Okitipupa	https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2022/06/01/20-year-old-mother-stabs-boy-to-death-in-ondo/
Thugs Demolish FG Housing Scheme in Ondo, Injure Workers	Thisday	1/6/2022	Ondo	Akure	https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2022/06/01/thugs-demolish-fg-housing-scheme-in-ondo-injure-workers/
Oyetola condemns shooting of Nation Newspaper reporter, another citizen	Business-day	1/6/2022	Osun	Osogbo	https://businessday.ng/uncategorized/article/oyetola-condemns-shooting-of-nation-newspaper-reporter-another-citizen/
2 Zamfara banditry kingpins, many others killed in rival clash	Daily Trust	1/6/2022	Zamfara	Shinkafi	https://dailytrust.com/2-zamfara-banditry-kingpins-many-others-killed-in-rival-clash
30 vigilantes feared killed by bandits	Daily Trust	1/6/2022	Zamfara	Bungudu	https://dailytrust.com/30-vigilantes-feared-killed-in-zamfara-bandits-attack
Kano APC gov primary: NHRC probes alleged killing of 3	Daily Trust	1/6/2022	Kano	Kano	https://dailytrust.com/30-vigilantes-feared-killed-in-zamfara-bandits-attack
Soldiers rescue child trafficker from being set ablaze in Abia	Daily Trust	1/6/2022	Abia	Aba North	https://dailytrust.com/soldiers-rescue-child-trafficker-from-being-set-ablaze-in-abia
Security Operatives Kill 5 IPOB/ESN Members In Ebonyi	Daily Trust	1/6/2022	Ebonyi	Onicha	https://dailytrust.com/security-operatives-kill-5-ipob-esn-members-in-ebonyi
Gunmen kill 4 herders, rustle 60 cows in Anambra	Daily Trust	1/6/2022	Anambra	Orumba North	https://dailytrust.com/gunmen-kill-4-herders-rustle-60-cows-in-anambra
2 Killed In Kwara Knife Attack	Daily Trust	1/6/2022	Kwara	Ilorin	https://dailytrust.com/2-killed-in-kwara-knife-attack
Vigilante Caught With Human Part In Zamfara	Daily Trust	1/6/2022	Zamfara	Zurmi	https://dailytrust.com/as-vigilante-caught-with-human-part-in-zamfara
Hunters kill 2 B'Haram terrorists in Borno, recover rifle	Daily Trust	1/6/2022	Borno	Dambo	https://dailytrust.com/hunters-kill-2-bharam-terrorists-in-borno-recover-rifle

Edo Pastor Flees As 2 Arrested For Performing Money Ritual With Cat, Coffin	Daily Trust	2/6/2022	Edo	Benin City	https://dailytrust.com/edo-pastor-flees-as-2-arrested-for-performing-money-ritual-with-cat-coffin
Hunter gunned down as police rescue kidnap victims in Abuja	Daily Trust	2/6/2022	FCT	Kuje	https://dailytrust.com/hunter-gunned-down-as-police-rescue-kidnap-victims-in-abuja
Daughter Of Abducted Kadpoly Lecturer Regains Freedom After 38 Days	Daily Trust	2/6/2022	Kaduna	Kaduna	https://dailytrust.com/daughter-of-abducted-kadpoly-lecturer-regains-freedom-after-38-days
Several Passengers Abducted in Kaduna as Terrorists Attack Motorists	Thisday	2/6/2022	Kaduna	Birnin Gwari	https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2022/06/02/several-passengers-abducted-in-kaduna-as-terrorists-attack-motorists/
Native Doctor Who Participated in Killing of Anambra Lawmaker Arrested	Thisday	2/6/2022	Anambra	Nnewi South	https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2022/06/02/native-doctor-who-participated-in-killing-of-anambra-lawmaker-arrested/
Troops kill 14 terrorists, arrest 15 in Borno raid	Daily Trust	3/6/2022	Borno	Gwoza	https://dailytrust.com/troops-raid-terrorists-hideouts-in-borno-kill-14
Police kill 2 bandits in Kaduna community, recover rifles	Daily Trust	3/6/2022	Kaduna	Birnin Gwari	https://dailytrust.com/kaduna-police-gun-down-two-bandits-recover-two-ak47-rifles
Police Arrest Four Suspected Armed Robbers in Ondo	Thisday	3/6/2022	Ondo	Owo	https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2022/06/03/police-arrest-four-suspected-armed-robbers-in-ondo/
Okene Explosion: One Killed as Kogi CP Vows to Bring Perpetrators to Book	Thisday	4/6/2022	Kogi	Okene	https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2022/06/04/okene-explosion-one-killed-as-kogi-cp-vows-to-bring-perpetrators-to-book/
Again, Muslim Extremists Set Man Ablaze for Alleged Blasphemy in Abuja	Thisday	5/6/2022	FCT	AMAC	https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2022/06/05/again-muslim-extremists-set-man-ablaze-for-alleged-blasphemy-in-abuja/

Gunmen abduct Catholic priest in Kogi	Daily Trust	6/6/2022	Kogi	Okehi	https://dailytrust.com/gunmen-abduct-catholic-priest-in-kogi-2
ISWAP fighters kidnap 5, burn 4 vehicles on Borno highway	Daily Trust	6/6/2022	Borno	Kaga	https://dailytrust.com/iswap-fighters-kidnap-5-burn-4-vehicles-on-borno-highway
Attacks displace 2,000 residents; bandits hijack food truck in Zamfara	Daily Trust	6/6/2022	Zamfara	Gusau	
Anambra police kill 6 gunmen	Daily Trust	6/6/2022	Anambra	Anaocha	https://dailytrust.com/anambra-police-kill-6-gunmen
Gunmen abduct priest's cook in Benue	Daily Trust	6/6/2022	Benue	Ogbadibo	https://dailytrust.com/gunmen-abduct-priests-cook-in-benue
4 killed, houses razed in fresh Kogi communal crisis	Daily Trust	6/6/2022	Kogi	Bassa	https://dailytrust.com/many-killed-houses-razed-as-communal-crisis-breaks-out-in-kogi
Troops Kill 5 Bandits In Benue	Daily Trust	6/6/2022	Benue	Katsina-Ala	https://dailytrust.com/troops-kill-5-bandits-in-benue
Police arrest 2 robbers, recover bike, laptop	Daily Trust	6/6/2022	Lagos	Lagos Island	https://dailytrust.com/police-arrest-2-robbers-recover-bike-laptop
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